

## **Landfill and Haulers Focus Group 9:30 6/30/04**

**Attendance:** Susan Puntillo, notes; Mark McDermid, facilitator; Gerard Hamblin, Brian Jongetjes, Jim Hartelben, Jerry Mandli, Dan Otzelberger, and Mike Etner , Todd Watermolen

**Introduction:** Information gathering, need their perspective, doing this because of budget issues, desire to take advantage of new technologies, and

### **Group Expectations or What they wanted to see coming out of today's session:**

- How do we know what we say will be taken into account? For now our input has been ignored. As a regulated community we are not happy. DNR is not responsive.
- If they had to score our results it would be a very low score.
- We told them they would remain in loop
- Take last 20 minutes to see top three suggestions
- We make things too complicated – dept gets bogged down in their own complexity – keep eye on protecting the environment. Partnerships – all have same goal in mind. Actions on both sides
- Simple clear rules so we can perform
- Inner bureau communications – need to be improved – people around the dept/bureau do not talk to each other
- Honest open dialogue with follow-up
- Do things in a reasonable timeframe
- They do not understand how the dept really functions and how they interact. No check between staff and how they operate and how sups operate

### **Question 1: What are the business needs and technology advance that you believe we should be aware of in issuing solid and hazardous waste approvals and licenses?**

- Predictability so business can plan
- Consistency issues of approvals – need a level playing field

- Responsibility – DNR must provide qualified, trained and knowledgeable people
- Technology – web site or electronic tracking of approvals and license request so everyone internal and external can monitor performance (tool, not a task or an excuse)
- Clarity ( both sides of the table), consistency (permit to permit, geography etc), coordination (air and SW and water) , and responsibility/accountability – when either party gets off track (can apply to dept in general) – have lots of examples if we need them
- Regional offices have always gotten answers for him – he does have someone that is accountable
- Central office command and control model is a problem. Success is with the decentralization and in the regions. (ADC issue – already 2 years and now rule making)

**Question 2: What business needs are currently not met by our program or in our approvals and permitting?**

- A lot answered in number 1
- Accountability for managing people – have people that do not have clear direction, not well trained, poor communication in dept.
- Timeliness – one does one feasibility take 8 months and another take 18 months – frustrates industry
- Seems to be a difference in haulers and landfill perspectives
- Individuals are the problem – again staff related and management of the staff been told cannot be addressed because of the union
- Approval time frame is probably the largest business need (DNR has self-imposed time frames, but they do not meet them – they would be happy if we did meet them)
- Some advanced planning – business tries to predict so they can capitalize on an opportunity. DNR is reactive.

**Question 3: What are the current costs to you in the approval, permitting, licensing we do? What are acceptable costs?**

- They accept the fact that there is a cost with permitting and licensing. Review fee is in limits. But do not seem to be related to the effort or the results. What they pay for should be worth what they are getting. Can recognize need for COL adjustment or CPI – need to be reasonable and predictable.
- Not cost example – it is the time delay and the cost or missed opportunity associated with that
- Invoice comes immediately, but did not get request addressed
- Processing facility plan mods - \$3K – and really only a rubber stamp
- Rule making – fees for a waste management stabilization research plan(\$2500) - we should have partnered this is a thing good for the enviro – not the 20 year old command and control model
- Did not object to paying more for better service – latest fee increase, but not getting their money worth

**Question 4: What are we doing well in the program?**

- Special programs at the hauling site – anything that can be done locally they get good response.
- Predict – when they go for a landfill expansion they are pretty well assured they will get it. They know they will get one, just do not know when. DO NOT LOSE THIS – better than in other states
- Recycling process, facility and people really good
- Decentralization is working well. Regions are really responsive and perform. NE and West – people and supervisors that perform and if they have to send things to Madison they make Madison perform. Sometimes they get in trouble for pushing or going around Madison. Make decision and take risks at local level
- Communication is much better at local level – use a phone call before sending a notice of non-compliance
- Local level shares drafts, get feedback and can make adjustments.

- Regional person shares training and technical stuff with locals
- Wishes he could let the outstanding people know they are appreciated.

**Question 5: How will you judge if we are successful?**

- People – people make programs so no matter how great the program or process – DNR needs to support, train, hold people accountable to its customer
- Industry wants to share technology – but people do not come or nothing happens once they do attend/participate
- GCLs is an example. Seems if they (DNR) can administratively charge time OK, else do not show up just for training
- Had an example of a higher level manager – but person said could not have money for travel – they offered, but no taker
- What is required, when and how you satisfy it? Then it goes to the clarity, timely, responsible, coordinated, etc.
- Shouldn't need side processes to get things done – or someone to track and push for you
- Something wrong when it takes less time to prepare an application then to get it approved
- Eventually we get there, but why is it so hard. Expand a landfill not build a new one
- Program on big scale is successful – no harm, no property damage, still site landfills
- We do have cost effective waste disposal in the state – cheap, effective, and safe
- Need to define work requirements – hydro, etc and hold them to it
- Rule making and then conditions start to become requirements without the authority or due process
- Standard procedures and expected timelines

**Question 6: What has been your experience in other states in obtaining solid and hazardous waste permits, approvals or licenses?**

- WI is great compared to New York's process – we have a two tiered process and locally negotiated approvals
- Michigan is better – predictable issuance – make statutory timeframes
- IL – worse
- WI is difficult to get approvals compared to sunbelt states
- AL is easy – landfills are constructed the same way, containment is same way, but process is easy – not aggressive enviro laws
- AZ – sites a general area landfill that could be multiple landfills, but only do it once
- MN has a good program – non-landfill, financial assurance (better means– more real life and cost effective)

**Question 7: If you could change 3 things about how the Waste Management program operates, what would they be?**

**Question 8: Do you think changes will actually be made to the program that will help business? Why/Why not?**

- What is going to be different this time
- Yes, current administration and attitude. Al is a breath of fresh air, Scott, Gov.
- We would not have been able to have these meetings years ago
- Al helped work the ADC issue
- No, we believe reluctance on part of dept to actually make a change, reorganized before but just realignment of people and we still have the same people.
- Sue needs to be a leader and do some things to make change rather than just be a figurehead
- Real divide old school and new school. Command and control alive and well in Madison, but regions get it

- We blame everything on budget cuts – cannot use it as an excuse.
- Structure cannot be an excuse either.
- People – how they do their job or not do their job
- Can make changes how do we implement. We have a terrible track record

### Gaps

- We have not addressed coordination – dept needs to coord between its different media. Must or DNR will fail. Must coord to be successful. Can't resolve conflicts – drinking water, air – resource recovery plant because cannot get permit in non-attainment zones
- Did not go far enough in discussion flexibility and self-implementation. Duplication of effort – they have engineers that do plan and then we review and redo plan
- Do some science do not just follow the recipe.
- Annual reports are a waste of effort

### Wraps

- Industry needs to understand how dept functions (2)
- Accountability for meeting self-imposed timeframes/deadlines
- More regional office authority and responsibility/accountability
- More advanced planning
- Intradepartmental communications – vertical and horizontal
- Culture – needs to change and the change needs to be at the central office (1)
  - Checks and balances for monitoring performance of employees
  - Clarity, consistency, coordination, and accountability
  - Coaching and attitude needs to be positive and reasonable – excellent customer service
- Predictability – time needs and constraints for industry to plan

Appendix - Landfill and Haulers Focus Group Minutes  
6-30-04

- Consistency
- Accountability
- Ongoing dialog on are we doing the four things.  
Predictability, clarity, consistency, and accountability Where  
are we on the continuum or metric